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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/504,815	08/17/2004	Yasuhisa Yamada	XA-10153	5583

181 7590 02/06/2007
MILES & STOCKBRIDGE PC
1751 PINNACLE DRIVE
SUITE 500
MCLEAN, VA 22102-3833

EXAMINER

TO, TOAN C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3616

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/06/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/504,815	Applicant(s) YAMADA ET AL.	
	Examiner Toan C. To	Art Unit 3616	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6-14 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6, 14 and 21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 August 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/17/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election of species 5, represented by figure 18A, claims 6-14 and 21 in the reply filed on December 28, 2006 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Duval et al (U.S. 6,343,993).

Duval et al (see figure 2) discloses a telescopic shaft for steering of a vehicle, assembled in a steering shaft and including a male shaft (1) and a female shaft (2) that are so fitted to be capable of transferring torque and to be movable in an axial direction relative to each other, characterized in that a first torque transfer portion (combination of the ball 3 and the spring 25), which includes a first torque transfer member (3) and an elastic body (25), is formed in at least one line of axially-extending groove (17) formed in each of an outer peripheral surface of said male shaft (1) and inner surface of the female shaft (2), wherein the elastic body (25) includes: a transfer member sided contact portion (31) being in contact with said first torque transfer member (3), a groove

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surface sided contact portion (a portion of the spring 25 which is in contact with the back wall 21 of the groove 17) spaced at a predetermined interval substantially in a peripheral direction from said transfer member sided contact portion (31), and being in contact with a groove surface (21) of said axially-extending groove (17) of said male shaft (1); and a biasing portion (a middle portion of the spring 25) elastically biasing said transfer member sided contact portion (31) and said groove surface sided contact portion in such a direction as to get separated from each other. With respect to claim 21, figures 5, 10, and 11 of Duval et al show more than one set of balls (3) being disposed at different locations around the outer surface of the male shaft (1) and the inner surface of the female shaft (2), therefore, the second set of the balls 3 is considered to correspond with a second torque transfer portion as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duval et al (U.S. 6,343,993) in view of Hobough (U.S. 5,460,574).

Duval et al discloses every element of the invention as discussed above in claim 6 but fail to disclose a lubricating agent is applied between the axially extending groove of the male shaft, the axially extending groove of female shaft, the elastic body and the first torque transfer member.

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Hobaugh teaches the invention wherein the lubricating agent is applied between the first shaft and second shaft and a plurality of different element (see column 5, lines 33-34, and lines 55-60).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the steering assembly of Duval et al by using lubricating agent as taught by Hobaugh in order to prevent wear upon sliding movement.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 7-13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Toan C. To whose telephone number is (571) 272-6677. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571) 272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

TTo

January 29, 2007